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75  
A  
POSTSCRIPT  
TO THE  
OBSERVATORS  
First Volumn.

OR, THE  
ANSWER  
OF  
MILES PRANCE,  
To Several of those Papers,  
Wherein he finds himself most Traduced  
and Slandered.

With some Notes to be added to Observator Numb. 8. of the 2d. Volumn.

---

Psalm LII.

*Thy Tongue imagineth Wickedness, and with Lies thou Cuttest like a sharp Razor.*

*Thou hast loved to speak all words that may do hurt, O thou false Tongue.*

*Therefore shall God destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee and pluck thee out of thy Dwelling, and Root thee out of the Land of the Living.*

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LONDON:

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Head-Alley in Pater-Noster-Row. 1684.

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# TO THE LOYAL Protestant Readers.

**H**AVING made so long an Apology in the first pages for the Necessity as well as Justice of my appearing now in Print, I intended not to have troubled my self or you with any particular Address, till finding new Scandals dayly sprung upon me, the Refuting whereof, Rendred these Papers more tedious, then at first designed, I must therefore begg pardon for their Bulk; But, why all this stir and so many Sheets? What is it to us, you'll say, whether Prance be a Cheat, or the Observator a Lyar! Not much perhaps to you, but of great Importance to me, Ple assure you Gentlemen; since I perceive my Dayly Conversation is beset with Spies, and no man (though never so honest and Loyal) That comes into my Company, but is presently in danger of being exposed as a Phanatick, and markt out (right or wrong) to the fury of the Rabble, and destruction of his Fortune and Family: And Considering that this usage may be any other mans Case to morrow, as well as mine to day; whenever the Observator for his own Glory, or on any secret design, shall think fit to proclaim War against him; I thought it high time to give all the World satisfaction of the Truth of the Case between Mr. L'Estrange and my self; That all persons of this Age, and such as shall write Histories in the next (which I find our Observator much values his Numerous Sheets upon, as the just Standard for them to take measures from) may have the Cognizance as well of the Defence as of the Charge; For he that has a Tongue to Condemn, before he imployes both his Ears to hear either Party, deserves to be Appeal'd from, as an incompetent Judge.

The Observator makes large Professions, that his Engagement is for the Government, and the Establish'd Church; But I humbly Conceive, 'tis no Honour or Service to either, That he Intermixes so much his own Personal Piques and Animosities,

And takes Liberty meerly on the Tales of his Busy Emissaries, to Expose any Honest Loyal Subject, that gives not up all the Faculties of his Soul, to a Blind Admiration of, and Acquiescence in his Papers, which are in many Particulars ( For I Speak only as to what I am Concern'd in ) as False and Malicious, as Trifling and Illogical.

The Gentleman has Liberally bestow'd on me the Titles of Cheat, Rogue, Rascal, Blasphemer, almost always Drunk, &c. But I thought it below the Gravity of a Citizen, or any Moral Man, much more of a Christian, to Reply in the Scurrilous Language of an Oyster Boat; and therefore as far as the matter would possibly bear, I have Abstained from any Undecent Terms, how much soever deser'd. Nor dare vye with so great a Master in the Mysteries of Buffoonery and Fooling: Soft Words and hard Arguments, as little Droll, and as much Reason as may be afforded, is the best method for all Controversies. Yet to divert the Reader, I have now and then descended to answer the Gentleman a little in his own way, to shew that what some men so highly Admire, is no such Transcendent Quality, but it might be Imitated.

A Little Wit, joyn'd with a Vast Ill Nature,        }  
And qualify'd for Lyes, as well as Satyr;        }  
May easily Commence an Observator.        }

But not to enlarge the Porch to a building which is already too bigg---The whole matter, Loyal Readers, is before you, and having first considered impartially, you are at Liberty to pass your Judgments as you find Cause. If any object the following Leaves are not all of my own Composing, It shall readily be granted; Nor can I find anybody will swear, that all the Observators are wholly of Mr. L'Estrange's own handy work; Let it therefore suffice, That there is nothing here said on my behalf, which I do not approve, and know to be true. And therefore am Ready to justify every Tittle; Witnesses my Hand,

Miles Prance.



## A

## POSTSCRIPT, &amp;c.

**T**H E Noife Mr. *L'Estrange* has laboriously (and even to many of his own Admirers, *nauseously*) made about *Brass-Screws*, &c. was in it self so *unprobable* as well as *false*; and his naked Suggestions (unconfirm'd with the least *proof*, or his being able to vouch any *Authors* or *Witnesses* for so heinous a Charge) having been already refuted by the positive *Affidavit* of an uninterrell'd Person, and a *Romanist* too, disproving the same; That, as I doubt not, but most sober considerate Persons, are long since satisfied of the *Injustice* of that *Accusation*, so I had the Charity to hope the *Observer* himself, however at first *Misinform'd*, might e're this be *asham'd* on't.

But finding that Gentleman, in his *Observers*, Numb. 470, and 471, Challenging all the World to Instance wherein he has *misreported*, or *partially represented* any one matter of *Fact*, and particularly reviving this *Thred-bare Story*, as one of the *Trophies* of his Achievements, and consigning the same over, as a matter *undeniable* to the Belief of *Posterity*: I should be wanting to *Truth* and my own *Innocency*, if I should not publicly Check, and yet further Detect those *Scandals*, which tend not only to the blasting of my Reputation, spoiling of my *Trade*, and *Ruin* of my *Family*, (which I can prove, Mr. *L'Estrange* with his own Mouth, most *unchristianly* own'd to be his Design) but also (which I conceive the first Forgers of this Scandal principally intend) the *Discrediting* that *Evidence*, I have faithfully given touching the manner of Sir *Edmund-bury Godfrey's* *Murder*: That *indelible stain*, which all the Popes *Holy-Water* shall never be able to wash off.

I foresee under what Disadvantages I appear, and am sorry I cannot avoid a Contest, with a Gentleman of *known Abilities*, and *reputed Loyalty*, so high in Popular Esteem, of so large an Invention, and *taking Expressions*, and one who will be sure to have the *last Word*; nor do I forget his Character, as now qualified, a *Magistrate*; but Truth is Truth, even in the Courser Language of a *Silver-Smith*: And Fallshoods and Calumnies are no better than *Lies* and Devices of the Devil to be abhorr'd by all *Christians* and *honest Men*, though dress'd up in never so rich Embroideries of *Craze* and *Oratory*. And though God and Nature have not endued me with equal *parts*, nor Fortune with so liberal an *Education*, (which the *Loyalty* of my Father to his King, was the chief occasion that disabled him to afford obey) so that I may not be so *useful*; yet I am bound to be, and by Gods Grace, will never fail to approve my self as *Honest a Man*, as Faithful and Obedient a *Subject*, and as Hearty and Dutiful a *Son of the Church of England*, by Law Establish't, as the *Wittiest Observer* in *Christendom*.

The Veneration I have for His *Sacred Majesty*, my Sovereign, guides my willing Duty to pay all Just Respects to every Person (though never so much my particular Enemy) that is vested with any *subordinate* Authority under him. 'Tis not with Mr. *L'Estrange* the *Justice*, but *L'Estrange* the *Observer* my Dispute lies; if he send out a *Legal Warrant*, I will readily obey; but if he publish things *false* and *scandalous* of me, I see not, why I may not *Answer* it, without being Tax'd as guilty of any Disrespect to the *Government*. His Gracious Majesty employing any in the *Commission of the Peace*, does not, I am sure, thereby intend to *privilege* Him, to injure the meanest of His Subjects.

What I attempt is no more than all *Laws Divine* and *Humane* allow, *viz.* The *liberty of an unblamable Defence*; to wipe off *Dirt* (or rather *Venom*) causelessly thrown upon me: In doing which, if any of it shall, by the Beams of Truth, be reflected back on the *first Author*, who can help it?

For whatever Service Mr. *L'Estrange* has done the *Government* and the *Church*, against the *Factions*, or the Enemies to either, I Cordially *applaud* and *thank* him. Nor do I Repine at his (reported) *Presents* and *New-years-Gifts* of a 1000 (nay, were they ten

land) *Guineys*, since for ought I know, he has deserved them; for in this Close-fisted Age, People are not apt to part with their Money, but on good Considerations. However I am pleased to hear that *Charity* or *Gratitude* (call it which you will) is so great and General amongst Protestants, and hope we shall hereby silence the *Papists*, upbraiding us for neglect of *Good Works*: I like a *Cheddar-Cheese* (to borrow the Metaphor from a well known Author) never the worse for being made *Great* by the Milk of the whole Parish; nor shall I ever envy any Mans growing *Fat* on the *Alms-Basket*.

In a word, I have as good an Esteem for the Active and Ingenious *Squire L'Estrange*, as I ought to have. And if (as the Author of *The Paquet of Advice from Geneva*,

\* A Pamphlet lately suppressed, by the Order (as I am informed) of the Right Honourable and Reverend, my Lord the Bishop of London, as scandalizing the whole Reformation, under pretence of exposing *Presbyterians*. The Author of which was one Mr. Pratt (that calls himself *Doctor*) one that heretofore was always not only a professed, but virulent *Papist*, and I never heard of his Conversion.

\* *Numb. 2. p. 10.* affirms. He be one undoubtedly sent from above to Act here in his Generation, for the great Good of his King and Country, and to be vere *Malleus Rebellium & Phanaticorum* (which, I am told, signifies, a Mawler of Rebels and Fanaticks) I only wish, he had kept altogether to that work; let him Mawl them O' Gods Name, as long as he list, till his *Observers* outswell the Volumes of *Bellarmino*; and scourge them more severely than ever he did (as himself has told us) the *Wicked Cats* that haunted his *Bird-Cage*; that is, till he has made them leave off their Rogueries.

But if he will abandon his Province, and pull me Head and Ears out of the Church of England, and not only make me a *Phanatick* in spite of my Teeth, but also point me out as a *Rogue*, one that have forsworn my self against him: And that I cheated Her Majesty with *Brass Screws*; and design'd to defraud a Man of a Tankard, and made away my Servant, and sent for him, the said *L'Estrange*, to the Old Dog-Tavern, and then denied it, with such and such horrid Oaths, when not a word of all this is true; I hope I may have leave to say—Your Worship in these particulars is mistaken; and to disabuse the World therein, even in like publick manner; since, as himself says, *Observer*, *Num. 473.* Nothing but Print can answer Print. Besides, I have his own Allowance, *Observer* 470. You are at Liberty to shew the World my Errors.

Now therefore to the matter—And first, the old Job of Brass-screws—That which Mr. *L'Estrange* affirms, is—“That I being imploy'd to make an *Antependium* to the Altar of Her Majesties Chappel, did fraudulently either make Brass-screws and reckon for them as Silver, or having made Silver; and being paid for them as such, did purloin the Silver ones, and put Brass ones, with only Silver Heads in their stead—Here's no less than Cheat, and Felony, and Sacrilege, all Charg'd in a Lump, but where's the Proof? As for that, you have only the bare Suggestion of the *Observer*: Now, though that Authors Opinion, when he talks of the *Politticks*, may (for ought I know) be indisputable; yet as to matter of Fact, if he shall tell us, it Rains Butter'd Parsnips, and that the Thames is turned into a dish of Clouted Cream, when we see nothing but Snow falling, and Ice under-foot, he must excuse, such as wear Eyes about them, if they demur a little to the Belief of those Miracles.

For the Readers satisfaction, who possibly may not be so well skill'd in Chappel-Furniture, as an *Observer*, that owns, he has been forty times at Mass: I must here first describe what an *Antependium* is, viz. An Ornament set before the Front of the Altar, of which there are several sorts, some more Rich for Great Festivals, some more Mean, for Ordinary times; some Mourning ones used, when Mass is said for Souls in Purgatory, which (if I do not misremember) is every Monday; and accordingly these *Antependiums* are frequently remov'd, as occasion requires.

That which I was concerned about, was a very Rich one, to be used on High days; And *Doctor Godden*, Treasurer of Her Majesties Chappel, by the means of *Father James*, (who was then my Confessor) imployed me, it being propos'd to me and Mr. M. (a Roman Goldsmith in Fleet-street,) and both of us made Draughts or Models, which, the Doctor told me, were presented to the Queen, and Her Majesty was Graciously pleas'd to approve of mine, and so I was pitcht upon to do it; the rather (as I believe,) for that the same Doctor told me, Mr. M. ask'd a 4th part more per Ounce, for Work and Fashion, than I offer'd to do it for.

Being thus imployed, and having made a punctual Bargain at fixt Rates and Prizes, to make an *Antependium*, and steps to the Altar, and two large Flower-Pots; I was furnished with a quantity of old broken Silver belonging to the Chappel, which I spent

spent several days time and labour, in taking off from the Wood, &c. Which Silver was intended both to supply matter for the Work to be done, and with it's overplus to pay me for doing it, and was all exactly weighed when delivered to me; which was as near as I can remember, about the Moneth of September, 1674. And I was enjoined to finish against the Feast of our Saviours Nativity, so there was a necessity to employ more hands, (in so large a piece of work) than my own and my Servants (yet the *Observer* objects as a Crime that I did not do it *all my self*, whereas had I design'd a *Cheat*, I should my self have endeavoured to do it *all*.) But I caus'd the old Silver to be melted down by others, (who might be able to attest it) which, tho' I confess I did not do out of any foresight, yet 'twas happy for me, since otherwise I might now have been liable to a far greater scandal of *Embezzling* it, (a more tempting bait to nibble at, than this peddling business of a few *Brass Screws*.) Having thus caus'd it to be melted, and several *Assays* to be made thereof at our Hall, (whereby it appeared not to be worth above four Shillings an ounce) and shew'd them to Doctor Godden, (who I must tell Mr. *L'Estrange*, was a person so Faithful to Her Majesties Interests, and in himself so Curious, Exact, and Sagacious, as not easily to be imposed upon) He thereupon by a note under his hand, (which I have yet to shew) dated September 28, 1674. Allowed the overplus to me, towards my payment at four Shillings *per Ounce*, exprelling the Reason in these words—*The coarseness of the Silver, and waste (which was not small) considered.*

The work going on, and *Screws* to fix the Silver to the Wood, which was to support it, being requisite, some few of those *Screws* were at first made of Silver, but perceiving the Silver allow'd, was not like to hold out to be enough to finish the work and to pay me, as was designed, I acquainted the Doctor and Mr. Plum (his Man) and Mr. Complayke, one of Her Majesties Servants, therewith, withall advertising them; That I thought *Screws of Brass* would be altogether as serviceable, and so that Silver might be spared if they thought fit, only on the outside to affix to them thin Silver Plates for heads to answer to the rest of the Work, which they readily consented to, and so those few *Screws* made, were melted down and employ'd in the Work, and all the *Screws* made of Brass, or if any one were left in by over-sight, 'tis more than I know.

The Work being done, Mr. Plum saw it *all weighed* and set up, and some of the *Screws* being found to be too long, Mr. Smith (a Workman employed by me, and who made at least several of these *Brass Screws*) did cut off the ends to shorten them, and soon after came Doctor Godden himself, and would have it weighed again, saying, *though he doubted not my word, and his Mans Relation, yet he could wish more assurance satisfy Her Majesty, when he had seen it weighed himself*, and so it was taken asunder again, and weighed in parts, (the Brazen *Screws* being apparent before him, but not weighed, only the Heads of Silver reckon'd for, which were weighed before they were put on, and being very inconsiderable, were not disputed) and so the Work was sent home to the Chappel; and tho', the surpluse of the Silver falling short as aforesaid, I was not fully paid according to the Bargain, yet considering how good a Mistress I had of Her Majesty, from whom I had almost work continually; and not doubting but in time I should be satisfied, it rested all the years, 1675, 76, 77, and 78. Towards the latter end of which last year, I having given a discovery of Justice *Godfreys Murder*, most of the Romans began to be very much my Enemies, and several Libels, As the *Compendium*, &c. were thrown abroad, reflecting amongst others on me; but still not a word of this matter, nor any hint of my being an *unjust* or *dishonest* man, before I forsook their Church.

But, (almost eight years after the work done,) viz. the first of April (the day *Fools* are wont to be sent on Errands) 1682. Mr. *L'Estrange* the first of *all men* living (as far as I can learn) broacht this story in *Observer*, Numb. 117. very tenderly (forsooth) at first by way of Quære or Advertisement, but afterwards, as some *Witty People*, by heat of fancy, invent *pretty Tales*, and tell them so often, that at last they themselves begin to believe them, so he grew more positive in the business; and now, *Observer* 471, is pleased to *scoff* at all *thoughts of Repentance* for it, which yet I hope God will give him, ere he goes out of this World, or else his account is like to be very dreadful in the next, for if for every idle word we must answer, much more for forging and promoting *Lies* and *Scandals*, designed to Ruine our Neighbour, and all persisted in and boasted of.

In the mean time, I shall first shew the *unlikelyhood* of the matter thus charg'd upon me; which against *Nude Averments* (tho' never so confident) is a sufficient defence. Secondly, I shall *disprove* his suggestions by Testimony upon Oath, and undeniable demonstrations?

When a man is fallily and maliciously attacked with Calumnies, that which otherwise would be insufferable *vanity*, becomes *necessity*; and on *that score*, I must crave the Readers excuse for mentioning some *Truths*, which without such a *fore'd putt*, I would have been far enough from relating of my self: As,

1. That having now been a *Trader* towards twenty years, I dare appeal to all, that I have had Dealings with, (*Papists* or *Protestants*) if they can justly say, I ever wrong'd them, or can instance in any particulars, wherein they found me addicted or inclinable to little *sharking Tricks*, *Injustice*, *Fraud*, or *Over-reaching*? Nay, whether on the other side, it be not true, that amongst the *Roman Catholics*, (with whom my chief Dealings lay, untill I left them,) I were not generally call'd by the Name of *Honest Prance*? If any such ill Practices could have been proved, as Mr. *L'Estrange* has not been wanting by his frequent Proclamations to invite Accusers, so I want not ill-willers, who would be glad of the opportunity, and you would e're this, have heard of some other Pranks besides the *Brass Screws*, yet no such thing has appeared. But on the contrary, even since I have renounced their Religion, Father *Lewis* the Jesuit, and Father *Hanslupp* the Monk (upon my happening into their Company, when brought up to *Newgate*,) did declare before several Witnesses, that they always lookt upon me to be as *Honest* a man (speaking as to my dealing,) as any in the World; and this was spoken on a long experience too, for with that Father *Lewis* (afterwards Executed upon a Conviction of Priesthood in *Wales*) I had very considerable dealings in the way of my Trade, now 'tis very strange, that I, that had managed matters so *squandy* with all the rest of my Customers, should so basely *begin my Cheats* upon Her Majesty, who was the *best Mistress* I had, or could ever hope for, and whose Work (which was a considerable part of my Lively-hood) I must certainly expect to lose, as soon as the Cheat should be discovered, which (as I shall prove presently) 'twas impossible (had it been so) to conceal for a day.

2<sup>d</sup>. Further, as to my Integrity, and Scorning to grow Rich by Unlawful and dishonest gain; I might give several Instances; but I shall trouble the Reader only with Two; *viz.* Several years ago (about the time, as I remember, that I made this *Antipendium*) my Lady *Gage* lost a *Jewel*, and long after, near half a year, when the *Bills* given out, on the first missing it, were forgot, and the Lady despaired of ever hearing of it, this Jewel was proffered me, and I knew it worth about 45 *l.* and might have had it for 10 *l.* but reflecting on the Parties readiness to part with it on such terms, and thereupon calling to mind the Bill, I stopt it, and restored the Jewel to the Lady. Now here might have been a secure Prize of 30 *l.* for the Reward in the Bill was but 5 *l.* (to the best of my memory) and if I had bought it for 10 *l.* I might have made above 40 *l.* of it, and having taken out the Stones, there would have been little fear of its ever being discovered, but I detested any such lewd design. And of this, that *Honourable Lady*, a *Remin* Catholic, and whom I suppose yet living, will, I doubt not, afford me the Justice of her Attestation to any that shall enquire.

Since that, having an Accompt with one Mr. *Ridge*, upon our Reckoning I perceived he had forgot to Charge me with some Ounces of Gold, amounting to about 12 *l.* and was so far from calling the same to mind, that he allow'd himself a Debtor for about that Value; and so it must have pass'd, had I not *voluntarily shew'd* him his mistake from my Book. Now, that I, who used so much tenderness in these Cases, should thus impudently attempt to *defraud* Her Majesty, will I suppose need *some proof* before it be credited by Impartial men.

Especially, if they consider me then a strict and zealous *Catholic*; for, that so I was, I appeal to all that know me, being as Bigotted therein as any, and meely on that score, the Priests *Kelly*, &c. had the confidence to trust me with their Wicked Intrigue against Sir *Edmund-bury Godfrey*. Now being thus Principled, tho' I had been so *Immoral*, as to have wronged Persons in other Cases, yet 'tis hard to think, I should do it here, where fraud must become *Sacrilege*, and no less impiety than *Robbing that very Holy Altar*, before which I so constantly pay'd my Devotions, wherein the thoughts of the present instances of my *Conscience*, must continually upbraid and torture me.

All this severally and jointly considered, may amount at least to a *Violent presumption*, of the falsity of the Observators *simple Allegation*, to any man, whose prejudices or interest have not made him resolve to believe any Scandals, tho' never so unreasonable, of *Prance*, and blindly to swallow, without chewing, any thing he meets with in an *Observer*.

For nothing can be more absurd, than to imagin, that I, thus circumstanc'd, should be guilty of the *Grand Cheat* he would now fix upon me, so contrary to the common bent of my Inclinations, as well as justice, and so highly against all *Gratitude* as well as the apprehensions of Religion, and attended with such apparent *hazards* and under a certainty of being discovered, and all this for so paltry a profit, as could be expected from such a business; and also when I had not the least Temptations of *man* to prompt to it; for 'tis well known, that, by her Majesties favour and the interest I had with the *Roman Clergy*, and Gentlemen of that persuasion, I had a very *Competent Trade*, and tho' I always liv'd freely for a Person of my condition, yet I may justly averr that when I fell into my troubles in 78. I was worth a 1000*l*. And no less was attested (as I have been Credibly Informed) to his Majesty and Council by a worthy Gentleman, still in the Commission of the Peace, on his view of my *Shop*, and *House*, when I was first seized.

But the *Observers* suggestions are not only *Improbable*, but *Notoriously false*, which if I make appear by sufficient *Testimony upon Oath*, and reasons necessarily *Conclusive* (than which two, I know not amongst men any *stronger proof*) I hope I shall convince Mr. *L'Estrange*, or at least, the rest of the World, that I am grossly *abused* and *slandered* by him in this Matter.

First, therefore, be pleas'd to read the following Affidavit; and withall, Note, that the Person, that made it, is of the *Roman Catholick* Communion.

Sarah Billing, wife of Robert Billing, of the Savoy, in the County of Middlesex Goldsmith, maketh Oath; That she this deponent about eight years since, did Board with Mr. Miles Prance Goldsmith, at his house in Princess-street near Covent Garden, for the space of a whole year and upwards. In which time, she this deponent, knows and does well remember, that the said Miles Prance was employed to make an Antependium for the Altar, with steps to the said Altar, at her Majesties Chappel (then) at Sommerfet-house; and she, this deponent did diverse times see and observe the several parts of that work, and see the Screws made thereunto, which were of Brass, only on the heads there were silver Plates soldered under. And this deponent saith, that the making of the said Screws of Brass in that manner, was with the knowledge and Consent of the persons concerned; for she, this deponent, did know Mr. Plum and Mr. Coupledyeke, who were some of the persons, as she then understood, that employed Mr. Prance about that work, and she hath seen them viewing the said work, and having the said Brass Screws in their presence, looking on them, and heard them discoursing Mr. Prance about the same: They saying, that the said Screws being of Brass, would do as well as if they had been Silver, or words to that very effect and purpose. And also she hath seen Doctor Godden (as she was then told that was his Name) viewing the same: And the Screws were Brass, and that only the fashion, or making, and Silver on the heads of them Reckoned for, was Notorious not only to Mr. Prances Servants and Workmen, but to the Gentlemen before named, and several others of Her Majesties Servants, who frequently came to view the same, being a very fine and extraordinary piece of work, which (together with her being continually about the house and shop) caused this Deponent to take the more particular notice of, and better to remember the same.

Sarah Billing.

Jurat. Coram me 10 die Aprilis, 1682.

John Frederick.

The *Observer*, Numb. 129. undertakes to comment after this manner, upon this Affidavit, and says, the Gentlewoman was imposed upon in the wording (which is a Civil way of telling her, she was perjur'd) for says he, she declares since, that by seeing the Screws made, she only meant after they were made—Now whether she did ever so declare, I know not, but however if she did, 'tis nothing to the purpose, the question in dispute not being whether she stood by, all the while every one of the Brass Screws were

making, nor is it to be imagined she could, since they were made at several times, and perhaps by several hands. But whether I made, or caused them to be made clandestinely, and without the *Privacy* or *Consent* of *Doctor Godden* and his Man *Plum*, and Mr. *Copledyke*, who were the lookers after the Work; or chang'd them, after they were reckon'd for as *Silver*; now to this she swears positively, that they all saw them, and that she heard *Plum* and *Copledyke* say, those *Brass-Screws* would do as well as *Silver* ones. But to take this off, Mr. *L'Estrange* *Observer*, Numb. 126, tells the World, That *Plum* and *Copledyke* had drank many a pot of good Ale with me. — And what then Sir? The *Excise* was paid, and the good Wife that draw'd it, had a *License*; and therefore your Worship had nothing to do with it. Ale, especially good Ale, is the old *Catholick* drink of England, had we Carou'd in other *Puritonical* Liquors, you might have been offended, and cryed out with little *Doctor Edwards*.

—*There's Heresy in Hopps, give Calvin Beer.*

But without fooling, who can think, but the *Observer* (who trades much in *Hims* and *Immenado's*) intends by this Reflection, to possess his Readers with an Opinion, that this *Plum* and *Copledyke* were Confederates with me in this business of the Screws, so that to support the Scandal, here's two dead men must be expos'd as *Drunkards* and *Treacherous Cheats* to their Mistress the Queen.

But says he, they were no *Orderers*, as I assure you, — Now one would wonder, this Gentleman who vows and swears so bloodily, that he never was at *Sommer-set-Chappel*, since His Majesties Restauration, should become so intimate with these two Men, as to know what *Liquor* they lov'd, and be able to aver so positively, that he can assure us, they were no *Orderers*. — But against ten thousand of his Assurances, I tell him they were *Orderers*, as well as good *Ale-drinkers*; for they have several times given me *Orders*, and brought directions for *Work*, and particularly about this *An-terpendium*.

Mr. *L'Estrange* proceeds and says, That she knows nothing, who employ'd France, or that *Brass Screws* were consented to by the Persons concern'd; all which is utterly false. She swears the just contrary, and names in particular *Doctor Godden*, *Plum*, and *Copledyke*, and tho' she says, that she then understood *Plum* and *Copledyke*, were *SOME* of the Persons that employ'd France, 'tis not the least blemish to her Oath; for so they were mediately under Her Majesty and *Doctor Godden*; and seeing them frequently coming to enquire after the Work, and give directions about, and weigh it, &c. how could she then think otherwise? Yet she says only, that she understood them to be some of the Persons, and presently adds, that she also saw *Doctor Godden* viewing the same *Brass Screws*.

The *Observer* alleges further, that This Affidavit was drawn from her upon pretence, that she was to be a Witness in a suit at Law, against a Woman that had scandaliz'd me. To which I answer, 1<sup>st</sup>. That this is another contrived falsehood, there was no such pretence; 2<sup>ly</sup>. 'Tis absurd, for all the World knows, that Affidavits are not allowed in such Suits, where the Witness is living and at hand, able to testify *viva voce*. And 3<sup>ly</sup>. 'Tis impertinent, for had it been so, it concerns not the Truth of what she deposes, whatever use I intend to put it to. And I cannot fathom the Gentlemans reach in this Objection, unless it be to signify, that the Gentlewoman being a *Romanist*, might needs have such a kindness for him, that she would not have testified the Truth, if she had known it would turn to his prejudice and confusion: But if he had any such thoughts, I must do her the Justice as to acquaint the World, he was grossly mistaken; for the Gentlewoman soon after, went to him, the said Mr. *L'Estrange*, and expostulated with him about the *Abuses* put upon her in subsequent *Observers*, and amongst the rest, his affirming that she had been my *Servant* (which had it been true, had nothing impaired her Evidence) but the same was altogether false, for her Father honestly paid 15<sup>l</sup>. a year for her Board, whilst she lay at my House. In which discourse of hers with Mr. *L'Estrange*, another passage happened, that might give some indications of that Gentlemans Temper: For she rounding him up for broaching such false Stories against me, which tended to the Ruine of my Family: He answered (as she has declared) That he did it on purpose to Ruine me, and wondered that SHE [he understood her to be a *Roman Catholick*] would appear in the behalf of such a *Rascal*.

But besides this full proof on Oath, the Circumstances of these *Brass-Screws*, undeniably evince the impossibility of any intended Fraud: For first, had I designed any such thing, I must have been a *Conjurer*, (which I suppose the *Observer* does not take

take me for) before I could have effected the *Cheat*, and cast a *Mist* before Peoples Eyes; for besides that, 'tis not pretended these Celebrated Screws were *Gilt* or *Silvered* over, but plain, open, visible *Brass*, only Silver heads to them on the out-side; And besides, that they were made abroad by my Work-men; you are to note, that the use of them was (as aforesaid) to fix the *Silver* Work to the *Wood* that upheld it, through which they came, and were there made fast with *Nuts*, and the Antependium being a Moveable, only used on *Solemn Festivals*, and then set aside into the *Sacristy*, for which purpose, there were on the back-side two large *Iron Handles* to bear it away by, as often as the same was so removed from the Altar; these *Brass Screws* were to be seen on that side, as plain as the *Iron Handles*, or the very Nose on the *Observator's* Face: And I question, whether I owe it not to the Gentlemans forgetfulness, that (when his hand was in) he did not also Charge me with *Transubstantiating* these Handles into *Iron*, as well as the *Screws* into *Brass*.

The Gentlewoman, as you have heard, Swears, that the Screws being Brass, was *notorious*, not only to my Servants and Work-men, but to the Gentlemen before Named, (*viz.* Doctor *Godden*, *Plum*, and *Copleyde*) and several other of Her Majesties Servants—Now, though, in my Confinement in 78, and the Hurry and Confusion of my Family on that Account, I had the unhappiness to lose a Shop-Book, which would more fully have demonstrated it; yet by good Providence, I have one old Book still remaining in my Custody, which enough Corroborates her Testimony; there being entered a Memorial in these Words, *viz.* For a Brass Screw for the *Holy Ghost*, [A Figure in the Antependium] 10—6, that is weighing a Halfpenny weight and six Grains, being the Hand-writing of *Thomas Evelyn*, then my Servant, and since *Porter* to his Grace, the late Deceased Duke of *Norfolk*; and though a *Roman Catholick*, yet I have that Charity to believe, he will not deny his own *Hand*, which is ready to be shewn for any Gentlemans satisfaction.

Nor do I doubt to Appeal to Doctor *Godden* himself, who I hear is still living, tho' he cannot be presumed to have now any *kindness* for me; yet I so much confide in his Generosity, Veracity, and Morality, as to believe, he would do me *Right* herein: Nor is it credible, though I know not where that Doctor is, but that the *Observer*, who could with a wet Finger, bring Certificates from *Salamanca* in *Spain*, and has shewed his Correspondence at *Rome*, and with a Foreign Minister of State about *Hubert* (legally Executed for Firing *London* in 66) that he was *not Guilty* of that flagitious Crime, for which he Suffered, or was a *Protestant*, or *Distracted*, could not but as easily have found means to procure a Testimonial from Doctor *Godden*, had he not despaired of any relief from that *Learned Gentleman*.

Let me add to this, That, when after the Antependium had been a considerable time in the Chappel, some of the *Nuts* were lost; Her Majesties Servants have brought the Brass-Screws to me, to make and fit new Nuts to them, which I think demonstrates the *Brass-ness* of the Screws could be no such new thing, as that *Monsieur Cozuns* (the Man the *Observer* means) should with such surprize, like a second *Archimedes*, magnifie his Discovery, and cry out—*Here's a damnable Cheat, Brass-Screws, &c.* As you will find *Romanc'd, Observer* 127.

The Gentlemans talk about *Sodering* of Brass unto, or upon *Silver*, and noise of *Eclony*, or a *Pillory*, is altogether Impertinent here. 'Tis true, to incorporate Brass, or any base Metal with Silver, or to Soder it to Silver, where 'tis not visible, as in the Handle of a *Tankard*, or the like, is justly Criminal; but to adjoin or affix an Head of Silver open and visible on a Screw or Pin of Brass, or the like; as it carries nothing with it of a Cheat, so neither is it in any way punishable; but daily practis'd, as in Looking-Glass-Frames, the Hafts of Knives, and a thousand other things,——And so much for *Brass-Screws*.

Another matter the *Observer* would seem willing to have believed, is, That a *Tankard* which I lost out of my Shop, being brought to me to have some Bruises beat out, was, after I had pretended the same was Stolen, found in my Wives Trunk. This is likewise absolutely false, and all the proof brought for it is, The *Observer*, Numb. 120, says A Person being questioned by me for this Scandal, did upon his Oath declare, my Servant said—*I thank God, the Tankard I was suspected for, was found in my Mistresses Trunk, amongst other Plate*: Now what Evidence such an Hear-say from an idle Boy amounts to, is left to Consideration.

The very same *Observer* acknowledges, that I did in the year 1678, give out *Bills of Notice*, That this Tankard, mark'd at bottom *R. B.* and of such value, was taken out of my Shop; with an offer of Reward to the Discoverer, which is true, and therein was also promised, That if any had bought it, I would reimburse the full value; and in getting these *Bills Printed and Publish'd*, and otherwise about it, I was out of Pocket above 20 s. Now to what intent I should do this, if indeed the Tankard were *not Stolen*, is a Riddle: For the Tankard was brought to my Wife at my Shop, by a Servant of the *Horse-shoe Tavern* in Drury Lane, and to the delivery easie provcable; consequently *stolen or not stolen*, lost or only concealed, I was compellable by Law to make *Satisfaction* for it; therefore so to hide it up in a Trunk, and yet to be at the Charge aforesaid in *Bills*, must be Madness as well as Dishonesty.

But, so far were both I and my Wife from any thoughts of defrauding the People of their Tankard, that nothing was more upon her Mind and Endeavours in the highest Disorder of our Troubles, than to make satisfaction; for, she, having upon my Seizure, removed to one Madam Lees in the *Pall-Mall*, a Trunk wherein were Eleven Silver Tankards, and amongst them, Two bought of one Mr. *Strickling*, which were not paid for, and another second-hand one, which I had bought of a Gentlewoman living at a Dancing Masters in *Duke-street*, my Wife before Madam Lee took out the said second-hand Tankard, and two Tankards unpaid for, telling her, that a Tankard belonging to the aforementioned Tavern, was lately lost at our Shop, and she would not for the World, but it should be made good, and therefore she would allow them this second-hand Tankard for it, tho' it were of better value, and return Mr. *Strickling* his two Tankards again. But it being very late, Madam Lee perswaded her not to carry them that night, and so the business rested till after I had my liberty, and then I gave the Tavern another Tankard in lieu of theirs, which had been so stolen, and the beforementioned Tankard which had been in my Wifes Trunk, (and which must be the Tankard intended by the Boy, if he did ever talk at such a rate, for all the rest were new ones) I sold to one Mr. where the Owners of the other may easily satisfy themselves, whether it be the same.

But the *Observer*, not content with buzzing this senseless Scandal, would insinuate further, as if I made away that Servant of mine; for thus he puts the question—*But what became of this Prentice?* And shapes an Answer thus—*The report of the Neighbourhood is, That (tho' he was not out of his Apprenticeship) they never heard of him since.* 'Tis true, *Observer* 126, says, *this imports no more than that he had left the Neighbourhood, and that by all the other Story, I was not accused of saying a Tankard was stolen, when it was not;* But then I pray, to what purpose were these Stories told in Print? Is it not the usual Artifice of a Base and Cowardly Malice, to cast Scandals and Calumnies on those they have a spite against, by *fly Hints* and Insinuations, sometimes by seeming praise, sometimes by pretended good wishes, sometimes by dark Items, &c. All which wound as deep, and both more certainly, and irremediably, than the most broad faced Aspersions: Thus the same *Observer* Numb 127, affirms, *he has not charg'd me with changing the Screws.* Here I appeal to all serious Readers, if this be not the grossest shuffling and prevarication, for what then is it he would be at? Or to what intent has he amused the World with all this Bustle and Clamour? But I think Mr. *L'Estranges* Design herein is not unknown. And I am sure I have in my Trade deeply felt (tho' most causelessly and unjustly) the Effects on't. And I know no Man that can promise himself security from having his Reputation fly-blown with the most damnable Scandals, if he happen to fall under the *Observers* displeasure, and such lewd Practices be suffered to pass with impunity.

And now to the *Old Dog-Story*, which as the *Observer* tells it, runs thus, That I, June 16. 1682, sent to *Sam's* Coffee-house for Mr. *L'Estrange* to that Tavern (which he will have to be with a design of some horrid Plot against him) and soon after, he being a Man of foresight, not thinking fit to come, but sending some Friends, I with most Wicked Oaths and Imprecations denied that I sent for him—This he undertakes to prove by the Testimony of three Boys of the *Wonder-Tavern*; how they were induced to give it, I will not enquire at present, but can prove some of them have since disowned it.

But the Truth of the matter was thus, I and one Thomas Jennings a Cloth-drawer, a very Honest man, and Ingenious above most of his Quality, but frolicksome, and apt to droll, went to the *Old Dog Tavern*, and having seated our selves in the *Kitchen*,



(no very fit Room for carrying on an Intrigue) *Jennings* having an occasion to speak with one, whom he thought might be at *Sam's Coffee-house*, ordered one *Thomas Harris* a little Boy in the House, (who has since own'd himself not to be above 12 years old, tho' *Thompson* advanced him to 20.) to go thither to *Ask for him*, and knowing, Mr. *L'Estrange* frequented that Coffee-house, and what a kindness he had for me, merrily added—If he be not there, *Inquire for Mr. L'Estrange* and tell him here *are one or two would speak with him*.—And tho' he spoke it with such an *Air of Droll*, that it might be easily known to be wholly *Jest*, nor was it imaginable a person of Mr. *L'Estranges* figure would on such a slight Invitation, without sending any Name, regard it, yet the Messenger being a *raw Boy*, not finding the Person he first ask'd for there, very formally (it seems) dispatcht the latter part of his Message, and Mr. *L'Estrange* being in the Coffee-house, and perhaps understanding from the Lad, I was in the Company, presently after, several Persons came to us from *Sam's*, and began to quarrel with me for sending for Mr. *L'Estrange*; which I being wholly innocent of, as earnestly, as justly denied, I having never had the least thought of any such matter; For as I had no Business with the Gentleman, so I had little reason to desire his Company; but that I used any such Oaths and Imprecations is false; And tho' of all mankind the *Observer* may be the unfittest to upbraid any body with swearing, I shall here subjoyn the Affidavit of the said *Jennings*, who sat close by me during all this time.

*Thomas Jennings, Citizen and Haberdasher of London, maketh Oath, that on Friday the 16th. of June Last about ten of the Clock in the Evening, this deponent went with Mr. Miles Prance to the Old-Dog Tavern within Ludgate, and saw down in the Kitchen, with him, and this deponent sent one Thomas Harris (Servant to Mr. Allen, that keeps the said Tavern) to Sam's Coffee-house, to enquire for a friend of this Deponent, that he heard was there, and if he was not there, to enquire for one Mr. Roger L'Estrange, to tell him, there was one or two would speak with him, and some time after there came three or four persons from Sam's Coffee-house, into the aforesaid Kitchen, where Mr. Miles Prance and this Deponent were, and began to quarrel with Mr. Prance, and using provoking words to him, to know his Reason, why he sent for Roger L'Estrange, which he denied he did, but not with such Imprecations, as, by God's wounds, and by Gods Blood, and God dam' me, as this Deponent to the best of his knowledge heard, who was in the same Kitchen with Mr. Miles Prance all the time; this deponent saith further, that he Enquired twice of the aforesaid Thomas Harris (that he sent) whether he ever heard Mr. Miles Prance swear such Oaths, who denied, he ever did, (as I, this deponent can prove by witnesses.)*

*Thomas Jennings.*

Jurat. 8. die Augusti. 1682.

*Coram Job Charlton.*

For further Confirmation hereof, if the Attestation of a dying man may add any weight, this Mr. *Jennings*, being since dead in May 1683, during his sickness, he voluntarily Endors'd the aforesaid Affidavit with his own hand, which is known to hundreds, (for the man was acquainted with Persons of most Conditions, in this City) and ready to be produced, to any that desire it, in these words.

*March the 7th. 1682;*

*I Thomas Jennings being in a weakly state of Body, not knowing whether I shall live a week, do Attest, all that I have sworn on the other side, before Sir Job Charlton is truth, witness my hand.*

*Thomas Jennings.*

*Written in the presence of*

*John Horton.*

*Robert Pimm.*

D

And

And on this Issue, I must leave this matter (there's no fence against a Flail) 'tis plain we were in a *Tavern Kitching*, the Boys say, I sent for Mr. *L'Estrange* (the most improbable thing in Nature) and then *deny'd it with Oaths*. Mr. *Jennings* swears, that he, for him, and not I, and on his death-bed Confirms, that he, who sat next to me, heard me not use such *Lew'd Oaths*, as they pretend, and that the *Chief witness* disown'd it afterwards, which is further probable, in that none of the Persons sent by Mr. *L'Estrange*, and whom I discourf'd, who might sure have taken notice of it, as well as 2 or 3 Ubiquitary Drawers, have appeared to Attest it.—And this I think enough at present for that Business.

Another thing that Mr. *L'Estrange* often harps upon, is, That I should Swear he was a Papist, and this he makes to be the ground of his quarrel with me: Now, if I never Swore, nay, never so much as Said any such thing, 'tis then plain, that either Mr. *L'Estrange* has some other deeper and important design, in his continual Out-cries, and baiting me thus, or else, that he has troubled the World with so many sheets of Railing upon no Provocation, and to as little purpose.

The words of my Affidavit were as follow.

Midd. ff. **T**He Information of Miles Prance, taken upon Oath, the 25th of October, 1680, before the Right Honourable the Earl of Clarendon, and the Earl of Craven, two of His Majesties Justices of the Peace, for the said County.

This Deponent saith, That about three years since, he saw Mr. Roger *L'Estrange* three or four times kneeling at Mass in the *Queens-Chappel*.

Miles Prance.

Here's not one word of his being a Papist, for he might have come out of Curiosity to observe whether the Ceremonies here, were the same with those in other Mass-Houses beyond the Seas, where he acknowledges he has been at that Idolatry forty times, or, it may be, being a Lover of Musick, he came only to hear the delicacy of the Voices; whatever brought him in thither, there he was, let him protest never so much, and write a thousand Observations to the contrary: He says, indeed, I could not say, I saw him receive; 'tis very right; and so I told His Majesty, and the Honourable Lords of the Council; for I saw no such thing, and therefore I Swore to no more than I saw; 'tis the fairer Argument, that what I Swore was Truth.

But as I never Swore, so neither did I ever Say, he was, or is a Papist; for I must avow, I do not know what Religion the Gentleman has been, is, or may be of, nor whether he have any Religion at all. I Confess, I have seen him sometime since he was questioned about being a Papist, at his Parish-Church, and once met him at the Blessed Sacrament; (to which he came, under such Circumstances as might justly make any sensible man tremble) but I have not met with any of the Parish that can say, That they ever saw him at Sacrament, or Church in times past; though he had liv'd, I believe, a dozen years before the Discovery of the Popish Plot, in that Parish.

But it will be objected, There is a Book with my Name to it, and wherein this Affidavit of mine is recited, and the Title, *L'Estrange a Papist*; The Matter of the Book I own; but that Title was added by the Book-Seller; for all the Title I intended was, *Depositions and Animadversions upon Roger L'Estrange, Esq;* as evidently appears under my Hand, on the left-Hand Page of the Title, and in the first Page of the Book, and in several places of the Animadversions, and expressly, fol. 18. in these Words—*Whether Mr. L'Estrange be a Papist or no, I will not determine.*

The other Affidavits there mentioned, are as follow.

Midd. ff. **T**HE Information of Lawrence Mowbray, taken upon Oath the 25th of October, 1680, Before the Right Honourable the Earl of Clarendon, and the Earl of Craven, two of His Majesties Justices of the Peace for the said County.

This Deponent saith, That about the first or second Sunday in June, 77. An Acquaintance of one *Anderson* (which *Anderson* was Servant to Mr. *Allaben* in *Grays Inn*) being with him in the *Queens-Chappel*, saluted, immediately after Mass, a Person, whom he told this Deponent, was Mr. *L'Estrange*, who Licenfed Books. This Deponent saith, that

that he hath once since seen the said Mr. *L'Estrange* at Maff in the Queens-Chappel, and saw him to be the same Man he formerly saw there.

This Affidavit was voluntarily made by Mr. *Monbray*, and I knew nothing that he would or could swear it, till he had done it.

*The Information of Richard Fletcher of St. Vedast alias Foster, London, Physician.*

Who saith, That about 3 years ago, he met Roger *L'Estrange*, Esq; at the Half-Moon Tavern in Cheap-side, about Licencing a Book Intituled, *The Works of Geber, an Arabian Prince, and Philosopher*, and gave Mr. *L'Estrange* a Guiney for his License; and a Discourse happening about Religion; Mr. *L'Estrange* asked, of what Religion this Informant was? Who answered, *A Catholick*. *L'Estrange* Replyed; *Are you a Roman Catholick?* This Informant answered, *That was Nonsense; Catholick being Universal, and not to be Circumscrib'd*. Then *L'Estrange* bid this Informant explain himself. I answered, *That Faith, that wrought the Fear of God and to do Righteously, doth declare those that are of the Catholick Church, which I take to be the Church of England*. Mr. *L'Estrange* then declared himself to be a Catholick of Rome, and to believe the Faith of that Church, and told this Informant, that his Definition was too large. This Informant then asked the said *L'Estrange*, *Whether the Pope were the Head of that Church, of which he acknowledged himself a Member?* Who answered, *He was, and hoped ere long, many others would return to that Church, or to that effect, and farther saith not*.

This Mr. *Fletcher* was to me altogether a Stranger, nor can I imagine, why he should come in to Testifie such a thing, if it were not true; but for my own part 'tis plain, I swore no such matter, as that Mr. *L'Estrange* was a Papist, nor will I trouble my self about it; at his own everlasting Peril be it.

There is yet another Scandal brought, *Observer*, Numb. 226, with this Title---*France Cures the Kings-Evil*; where he tells a Story, That I, offering a Woman a Pint of Wine, should tell her, she had the Evil, and Swore by G--- I had Cured several Families my self of that said Evil, by the great Faith I have in the King, that I could do anything at Court, and that if she had ever a Neighbour she would oblige, I would see it done. And then should say to her, *Come, prithee let me stroke thee a little, &c*. Now suppose it had been true, that I had play'd the Fool to talk at this rate, yet I conceive, it would not have been absolutely necessary to the preservation either of Church or State, that Mr. *L'Estrange* should take the pains to Print it. But the whole Truth was thus, I and my Wife and some Neighbours being at the Horse-shoe, a Woman that was also a near Neighbour, happening to come in, I askt her to drink, she began to complain to my Wife, how she was troubled with the Evil; I advised her to be touched by his sacred Majesty, which she said had been done, I replyed, then I doubted you have not Faith, but for my own part, I verily believe, that thousands by that means have receiv'd Cure, and thereupon told her, how once an acquaintance of mine, that was of a contrary Opinion, and had argued against me, as if there were nothing in it, but conceit; it pleased God soon after to visit Him, his Wife, and Child, all with the same Disease; then he was willing to apply himself to His Majesties healing Hands, and I was an instrument to facilitate their access, and they were all three in a very short time after Cured, which Relation is a known Truth, and the Parties still living to justify it. Therefore I told the Woman she should have Faith; this was all that pass'd (my Wife and several others being all the while there.) There was no swearing, no boasting, that I had Cured several Families my self, or that I would do any thing at Court, nay, nor no Kissing, nor no stroking in the case; so that here are at least five notorious Lies all on a heap in one Column, and yet he Challenges the World to instance his mistakes in 470 Papers. But it may be, the Informer was to blame; for a dull Fool of a Razor-maker happening to be in Company, tho' he drank most of the White Wine call'd for by the Woman, yet refusing to pay his Club, was taxt for *spunging*, who, in revenge, 'tis like, ran to Mr. *L'Estrange* with a Tale, and added as much as his sorry invention could furnish, and the Man of *Observations* the rest.

Now, who can but blush, to see a Gentleman of his Parts and Figure, a man of the Age of threescore and ten or thereabouts, if not upward, a Person that besides *Quevedo* and Politicks, has read *Seneca's* Morals and Cardinal *Bona's*, to see, I say, such an one spending the last minutes of his Life in blowing of Sope bubbles, in exercises more Childish, but only somewhat more mischievous than Taw and Span-farthing; and in making himself

a Common Pack-Horse to bring to Town two or three times a Week in Form and Method the idle Tales of every malicious Cockscomb, and in Printing Stories that carry neither Truth nor Salt with them, but would be a Disgrace to the very Conversation of a Gossiping.

And now, I thought, as in *pag. 35*. I had done, and that the *Screws*, the *Tankard*, and the *Old Dog-Story*, &c. had been competently accounted for, and the first Volume of the *Observators* enough explained, as far as I am materially concern'd; for, as my protestation was before receiving of the Holy and Blessed Sacrament, (which I here again most solemnly avow to be in all points true) I think it not necessary to repeat any thing further, since all that the *Observer* has replied thereunto, will appear to every considerate Reader, altogether *sham* and *prevarication*. And as I am not at leisure to play the fool with the *Observer*, merely for Company, so I should lose by the Game, he getting Money (and perhaps Love and Credit with some people) for abusing of me; whereas I must defend my self wholly at my own Charge, and have no small difficulty to get a few *Innocent Sheets* printed, such is the dread of his Name, whilst he, besides the *Elemofynary* Guineys in abundance, makes a *Revenue weekly*, by hurting out Papers fill'd (amongst other things, with which I meddle not) which most egregious *Scandals* upon me, designed for the Ruine of my self and my Family.

But still here's new Matter, an *Observer* of the Second Volume attacks me—I find I am to be made a continual Subject of Mr. *L'Estrange's* Wit and Malice, an everlasting *Incom* to Madam Broom and her Author; And as a pleasant Lady defied her Gallant to frame a Letter, barring him only the use of half a score Modish-Words [As Flames, Divinity, Passion, Stars, Darts, &c.] so I scarce know, whether it be possible for Mr. *L'Estrange* in his present mood, to Compose an *Observer* without mention of, or some squint-Reflection upon *Ours* or *France*.

But let us review the Paper, and I think the fairest way will be, to Transcribe it, and only add a few Notes.—

Vol. 2.

The Observer.

Numb. 8.

With the leave of Mr. Claxton the Phanatical Taylor in Exeter Court. This is Miles Prance's *Observer*?

This is the Contents of the Chapter, after a new Fashion; the Parade to the Prize. The dreadful hundred-handed Gyant of *High-Holbourn*, arm'd with more Quills than a Porcupine, is setting himself in Battel Array against the Taylor of Exeter Court, and resolv'd to confound a man of Fashion. Behold how Indignation sparkles at his Eyes, like a Turkey-Cocks at the sight of a Red Herring, How Grim Wrath, more fierce than a School-Master's, sits upon his storming Brow, and he breaths nothing but Fire and Tow, Then, wo to the Knight of the Thimble and all his Host?

Fly Claxton! Fly, the Observer comes,  
Beating his Printers Balls for Kettle-Drums,  
And mounts at thee the Dead-doing Gun from Bromes.

Why, Phanatical Taylor? The man I believe will be found as much a Church-man as Mr. *L'Estrange*—But he must and shall be a Phanatick, for as you'll hear presently, he was such an impudent Heretick, as to talk against *Transubstantiation*, even over against *Sommerfet-House-stairs*.

Trim. Don't you know one Mr. Claxton, a Taylor in Exeter Court yonder by Exeter Exchange.

Observ. Yes, yes.—

[Hold, I am afraid this is a Whisker, for I believe, the *Observer* knows Claxton no more than the Pope of Rome—but let's go on]—A great Crony of Miles Prance [no more his Crony, than the little Bodies-Maker, that carried this idle Tale, is to Mr. *L'Estrange*, whom he then affirmed to have seen but the day before] They were at the Grecian Coffee-house together, upon Saturday last, in Catherine-street against Sommerfet-House-stairs, [very true] and they went afterwards to Hudsons Coffee-house in Drury Lane [right again; for I love to acknowledge all the Truths I find in an *Observer*, they are so Rare.]

Trim. I heard 'em upon a discourse of *Transubstantiation*, [I told you why he branded the Honest Man for a Phanatick] one would not think, that Two plain Fellows should

talk

talk so *slowly* about Religion. [Your Worship must excuse me: for since I left the Roman Church, I have read the Bible, whereby I find not only *Transubstantiation* to be a meer Fiction, but also that *back-biting* and *slandering* are very grievous sins, and without Repentance damnable. Let me beg of you to read that Good Book, which, if well heeded, will profit you more than all your Collected Guineys.]

Observ. Oh! *There's no body understands the Transubstantiating* (as a body may say) [pray observe by this Parenthesis, how tender the Gentleman is, lest he should profane that *accursed word*, which has been the occasion of destroying above a *Million of Bodies*, and God knowes how many Millions of Souls] of *Silver into Brass*, better than Prance. [This Scandal is already Answered] And then Claxton's *Old Dog at the light within*. But *Pae afraid* Prance's Religion will never carry him to Heaven; for he's almost always so damnable Drunk, that the narrow way will hardly hold him. [As to my being almost always Drunk, 'tis only an *Observatorism*, that is, a Scandal without proof or pretence; not that I will Pharisaically excuse my self from a Vice which in this Age is grown almost *Epidemical*, and not to take up one's Caps freely, is enough to brand one with the Title of a *Phanatick*. And those that shall peruse the *Observators* Writings, shall find him *elsewhere* Apologizing for such Debauchees; but as to my own *Guilt* or *Innocence* this way, I appeal to my Neighbours and those I convers'd with for five years past; in the mean time I doubt not but the Christian Reader will be astonish'd to find Mr. *L'Estrange* whilst he's charging me with *Drunkness*, at the same time wallowing himself in *Profaneness*, by such an unseemly and irreverent abuse in scurrilous Drollery of the words of our blessed Saviour—*straight is the Gate, and narrow is the Way*, &c.]

Trim. Come, come, keep a good Tongue in your Head, [good advice, but I am afraid the *Observator* will never observe it] For Mr. Claxton I can tell ye is a rising man, Come to me at 8 a Clock, to morrow morning, says Mr. Prance, (on Sunday that is) and thou shalt take measure of my Wife, my Daughter, and my Cozen; Miles Prance says it, and thou shalt have my Custom, Claxton, [this is Mr. *Observators* Dream, I never talkt of Wife, or Cozen, or my Custom, only I might perhaps bid the man come one Morning, and take measure of my Daughter, that being the only business I had with him; but since the *Observator* is become so great a Zealot for the strict observation of the Sabbath, I being a plain Fellow, and he so great a *Casnist*, would gladly be resolv'd, which is the greatest Sin—Suffering a Taylor to take Measure at 8 a Clock, (and so before Divine Service) on a Sunday, or employing (and upon the matter enforcing) a Printer to work the greatest part of that Sacred Day? And as to my own keeping thereof, I dare appeal to the Reverend Doctor Sharp (in whose Parish both I and Mr. *L'Estrange* dwell, and whose worthy pains in the Ministry, I can never enough acknowledge, and to the rest of that Parish, which of the two, Mr. *L'Estrange* or I have most constantly frequented Divine Service, or been ofttest at receiving the Holy Communion there?—But let us go on with the *Observator*.]—This was mighty kindly taken, let me tell ye, and if Mr. Prance goes on with a certain business this Term; Mr. Claxton will stand by him as far as 100 l. goes, for his Civility.

Observ. And what may that Business be?

Trim. He's resolv'd to try a touch with you about the Scandal of the Screws, you'd give an Hundred Guineys Composition for it, with all your heart, he says, [This is still the dreams of the *Observator*, he first Charges Claxton with *Champery* and *Maintenace*, Crimes highly punishable by our Laws, and then Avers, that I should say, He (that is, the *Observator*) would give me a 100 Guineys Composition. 'Tis most true, I believe that his Papers (I mean wherein I am Concern'd) are most justly Indictable for *Libels*, and besides the Author answerable on an *Action of Scandal*, but that I then threaten'd it, or had any discourse tending that way, is false; what if formerly, I declin'd suing him on Advice, of a good old Proverb, or what if I still have a mind, to be reveng'd on him by forgiving him, the Gentleman is not to prescribe to me, either the time or measures, I shall take for Righting my self.

Observ. Yes, yes, I heard as much, [from whom I beseech you?] and that he had a Quinny for an Halter for me, [twas ill husbandry, a Two-penny one, would serve as well] And so Prance and Claxton took their Turns at the Ribaldry, [and you and your Spies were nobly employ'd, to make *Observators* on't,] while a splay-foot'd Animal that was there, made a third man, and gave a wry-mouth, Amen to't: (This latter Clause may serve as an Index of Mr. *L'Estranges* Conscience, Respect to Truth, Honesty, and Common Civility, since

therein with an *Unmannerly Buffoonry*, bestows the Language of his oft Cited Authors, Western Barg-men, upon a Gentleman of as comely a Person, as good Quality (setting *Commission* aside) and I believe, I may say, as *fair an Estate* as himself, so over credulous he is to *Reports*, and so rash, in flinging abroad his Squibbs and Scandals in Print, without the least Colour of Truth, any appearance of Reason, or pretence of Provocation: For the truth of this matter was thus, *Claxton* and I did go into the *Grecian Coffee-House*, and sat Chatting there for some time, two strange Gentlemen in the Room, being officiously informed, (as I understand) of my Name, did, it seems, Eves-drop our talk, and at last Removed to us, and began to quarrel with me, about Mr. *L'Estrange*, alledging that I should say, I would give a *Ginney* for an *Halter* for him: Tho' I do not know, nor to the best of my Remembrance, believe, that I said any such thing; hereupon words being mutually Banded, and another matter (of which by and by) falling into debate, the Gentlemen grew so furious, that one of them threatened to *Cane* me, and I observing, he had never a *Cane*, and unwilling a Gentleman should lose his Humour, Civilly profess'd him *mine*, but he was not pleas'd to make use on't, and so *Claxton* and I went out of the House, as soon after the said two persons also did. And tho' they were, and are altogether *Strangers*, to both of us, yet by their Garb and Meen, I take them still to be *Gentlemen*, and consequently, do not believe, they were the *Observers Mercuries*, but rather think that the little dapper *Boddice-maker*, (who possibly had no better Employment,) might be the *Observers* Intelligencer, only this is to be Noted, that whilst the two unknown, were Railing and Upbraiding me, with several stories, which I suppose, they had taken up, meerly on the *Credit* of an *Observer*, there happening to be in the Room, by Chance, one *Squire Penny*, (and who was, if he still be not a *Roman Catholick*) he was Generously pleated, to stand up, and say to this Effect—*Gentlemen I have known Mr. Prance for 20 years and above, and never knew, or heard that ever he wrong'd Man, Woman, or Child: For his late Actions, I have nothing to say, I pity him; meerly for which Civil Attestation of truth, from a Gentleman, that had known me from my youth, Mr. Observer falls foul upon him with the slovenly Epithets of Splay-fac'd, Wry-mouth'd, &c.* Now if this be sufferable, I know not any Gentleman that can be safe from being expos'd at the like, or a worse rate in Print, if he do not quickly *Fee* the *Observer* with a Present.

But Mr. *Observer*, that feigns so many things as said there which were not, omits one matter which was the chief subject of our Debate; which was, whether Mr. *L'Estrange* did not hand the Paper, Intituled THE LORD PETRE's LETTER, to the Press (which no doubt his Informers told him of, as well as the rest, and I believe 'twas that put him into such an heat, tho' he prudently declines to mention it) for I did tell the Gentlemen, that I heard, and doubted not to prove, that Mr. *Braddil* in *Bartholomew Close*, who Printed the Letter, had declared that Mr. *L'Estrange* brought or sent the same to him to be Printed, but withall gave him instructions not to Print his (tho' said Mr. *Braddil's*) name to it: Now if this should happen to be true, that Mr. *L'Estrange* was the occasion of publishing that Paper, wherein all our worthy Protestant-Writers, (and amongst them, the most Learned KING JAMES, and the Right Reverend the present Bishop of Lincoln) who have charg'd the Church of Rome with holding and teaching the Doctrine of *Deposing and taking up Arms against*, and *Murdering* of Heretical Kings, are traduc'd as *false Accusers*, and therein to have been *Malicious and Ignorant*; Nay, a Paper which on the same score flies in the Face of the whole Church of England, and directly gives her the Lye, who for many years in her Publick Establish'd Liturgy, avow'd the *Faith of the Church of Rome to be Faction, and her Religion Rebellion*. I would demand of Mr. *L'Estrange*, or any of his *Ginney-givers*, whether the causing of such a Paper to be publish'd, be to be numbered amongst the *Good-services* he has done for the Church of England.

In the mean time, go on.

But *faith, Trimmer!* [remember Mr. *L'Estrange* is a severe Magistrate against swearing] when *Prance's* hand is in, he should do well to go through with his Work; and I'll give ye now a piece of History that is New to ye, [and yet this New By-blow is of such a Ricketty feeble Constitution, that it has been four years crawling in the dark, before it could waddle abroad in the standing stool of an *Observer*] and puts down forty of his Antependiums. [Some lies, 'tis acknowledg'd are heavier than others] For 'twere a thousand pities that a man that is so willing, should want Materials.

Trim. We shall have some tedious Tale now, but pray will you make it as short as the matter will permit. And without any Jesuitical Equivocations, Shifts, or mental Reservations. [This Trimmer, I find, is an honest foresighted Fellow, he knows, this sly Gray-bearded youth the *Observer*, is much given to tell meer Tales, and long ones, season'd for Fools-Palates, to make them to go merrily down, with Jesuitical Sawce.]

Observ. Why, then be it known to all men, That Miles Prance Silver-Smith, Screws and Nails-maker, Sacrament-protester, Old Dog Blasphemer, and Evidence for the cutting of the Duke of York's Picture. [This shews you the Rhetorick of an *Observer*; only as to the last words, 'tis fit to acquaint the Reader, that some time after the grand insolence committed in cutting the Picture of His Royal Highness in Guild-Hall, I being in company with several others, there happened to come in, one John Brooks formerly (if not still) a Papist, who in discourse own'd and avow'd more than once, *That he cut the said Picture*; now I appeal to all the World, what I could do less in respect of the Publick, and His Royal Highness my Sovereigns Brother, than to take notice of it, that the matter on a fair legal Tryal might be further examined and discuss'd? Accordingly I and another person present, gave Information thereof (*viz.* that such an one had so said and acknowledg'd) and thereupon Brooks was bound over, and I and the other person attended at Sessions to Evidence his Words, and a third Witness present, was ready to have deposed the Words, if it had proceeded to a Tryal. But when we desired an *Indictment* to be drawn, could not procure it. And so the matter was pass'd, tho' the party accused did not (as far as I could understand) deny the Words, but only pretended he was drunk when he spoke them. Upon which whole matter, whether I did any thing unbecoming a Loyal Subject, tender of the honour of the Royal Family, is left to Consideration.] Go on, Did, in February 1679, accuse Mr. Richard Fincham of being a Priest [he means Popish] which said Mr. Fincham was taken into the Custody of a Messenger upon that Information. [Here are several falsties; I did not accuse Mr. Richard Fincham of being a Priest, nor secondly, was he taken on my Information; but as he was apprehended upon suspicion, so I was examined whether I knew him? and what account I could give of him?] brought before the Council to answer the Charge, and Mr. Miles Prance Silver-Smith there present to make good his Information, The Council askt him how he came to know Mr. Fincham to be a Priest, The Silver-Smith did there upon his Oath declare; That John Fincham the Brother of the said Richard told him so; upon this the Earl of Essex demanded of what Religion and what sort of man the said John Fincham was? Prance replied, that he was a good Church of England-man, and a very honest Gentleman, and a Justice of Peace in the Isle of Ely, whereupon the said Richard Fincham was continued in Custody.

[This is a whole scheme of of untruths twisted up, and, to unravel it, I must rightly state the matter of Fact; The Question before the Council was, whether Richard Fincham was a Popish Priest? And I was examined to it, and tho' with a common knowledge grounded on the most violent presumptions, I did not question but he was so, as having made him a Chalice and other Priestly Utensils, and knew he was generally reputed amongst Catholics to be my Lady Savills Priest, tho' passing (as 'tis common) under the notion of her Steward, yet, not being able positively to swear him to be a Priest, because I had never been present, when he officiated the Mass, I was so justly tender in a Case, where a man's Life was concern'd, that I only deposed as to my belief grounded on hear-say, and that his Brother acknowledged it to me, which is most true, and if the Gentleman have a bad memory, I cannot help it.

And being hereupon interrogated by some of the Honourable Lords (that it was by the Earl of Essex may be true, but do not remember it) touching the said Brother Mr. John Fincham, I answered, That he was a Justice of Peace in the Isle of Ely; and 'tis possible I might add, a very honest Gentleman, as far as I knew. But whereas the *Observer* averrs, that I then deposed he was a Good Church of England-man; (though for ought I know, or ever said, he may be so) yet that I then swore it, is false; for how should I assert such a thing, that never had an opportunity to see him in a Protestant Church in my life? And besides, it thwarts that Evidence which I then truly gave, (and which I should not, but upon this provocation recite) for my own Vindication (not to cast any Scandal on the Gentleman) according to the Copy, as it was taken and delivered to me soon after I was examined by one of the Sub-Clarks, belonging to the Honourable Board, *viz.* 'That not long before the Plot was Discovered, I went to one Mrs. Halls in Eagle-Court, about four buiaess to Mr. Jeremy Jennings a Priest belonging to Mr. Ramsey, "living

"living near *Norwich*, where I met with Mr. *Fincham*, a Justice of the Peace for the Isle of *Ely*, and one Mr. *Poulton*, a Jesuit, and some others, (whom I knew to be Priests though I knew not their Names) after Mr. *Fincham* was gone, I asked Mr. *Jennings*, what he came thither for, and how he durst trust himself with him, being a Justice of the Peace. Pough said he) he is acquainted with many Priests in that Country, is their Friend, and will do us no harm, but what good he can, being a Catholic in his Heart, and will show himself so, if the times turn, but now cannot in respect of his Place; yet, says he, he does us all the kindnesses he can. Then speaking to Mrs. *Hall*, the Landlady of the House, thereof, she replied, He comes often hither, when he is in Town.

But whether Mr. *John Fincham* knew these Persons, that he then was there in company with, to be Popish Priests, or whether, what they said of him were true, I know not, they being Men of Intrigue, who often love to cast Scandals on the most Zealous Protestants, to render them suspected; all the intent I recite for, is to shew how improbable it was, that, at the same time I swore this, I should also swear (as Mr. *Observer* says) the same Gentleman to be a good Church of England-man; though still, as aforesaid, for ought I know, or ever said, he may be such. My acquaintance with Mr. *Richard Fincham* was very intimate; for besides the work I had done for him, I have yet several Letters of his by me (though more or less) which I am ready to shew his Brother, or any Gentleman that desires it, Dated from *Red-Hall* in *Torshure*, Subscribed—*Your Friend, Servant, and Country-man, Richard Fincham*, and the like obliging Terms, and particularly one Dated *January 25, 77*, whereby having ordered me the Receipt of some Money, he has these words—*I have by the bearer hereof (a Protestant Gentleman, and Neighbour of mine) sent you, &c.* Which Parenthesis, Protestant Gentleman, will, I think, to any unbiassed understanding, signify no less than an Item given me, that I should not take notice to him, of the Writers being a Priest, or to call him *Father Fincham*, as amongst Roman Catholics is usual, and without such Precaution I might have done: Now this Gentleman that paid me the Money, was, as I understand, a Justice of Peace near *Leeds*, though I have forgot his Name; if he be still living, he cannot but remember it. In a word, whether Mr. *Richard Fincham* be a Popish Priest or no, if Mr. *L'Estrange* (that seems so intimate with the Family) will be pleas'd to tell the World his Lodgings at present; 'tis odds, but something more may be said.

In the interim, here his Apologist, the *Observer*, Mr. *Richard Fincham* immediately upon this proceeding, gave his Brother *John Fincham* an account of what had passed, by the very next Post, who applied himself forthwith, upon the receipt of the Letter, to *Francis Bell Esq;* (a Justice of the Peace in the said Isle) before whom, he swore this following Affidavit.

"*John Fincham* of *Ourwell*, within the Isle of *Ely* and County of *Cambridge* Esquire, did upon the 5th of *March*, 1678, make this following Affidavit before *Francis Bell, Esq;* one of his Majesties Justices of the Peace of the said Isle

"That whereas the said *John Fincham*, is informed that one Mr. *France* hath lately declared upon Oath, to the Lords of His Majesties most Honourable Privy-Council, that he the said Mr. *France* was told by the said *John Fincham*, that Mr. *Richard Fincham*, his Brother was a Priest. He this Deponent doth Swear and Aver, that the same is wholly false and untrue; and that he is, and hath been so far from ever saying so, that he doth depose, he doth not know any such thing, as his Brothers being a Priest; nor did he ever know the said Mr. *France*, or to his knowledge, ever see him in his whole life. This Affidavit being sent up to the Lord Chancellor, the King and Council thereupon ordered Mr. *Fincham*'s Discharge.

As to this Affidavit of Mr. *Richard Fincham*'s, as far as it contradicts mine, I avow mine still to be true, and if I am not misinform'd, by the Civil Law at least, a *Domestick Witness*, that is, one so near related, is scarce allowable, or at least lyes under suspicions—but leaving that, I shall only remark, That the Gentleman swears, he doth not KNOW any such thing as his Brother's being a Priest, which signifies no more than that he did not see him take Orders; now can it be imagined, (especially at such a juncture as that was) but the Gentleman, had he not believed his Brother to be a Priest, would have added—nor believes him so to be, or some such words?

Note also, that the *Observer* says, what I deposed was in *February 79*. And this Affidavit of Mr. *John Fincham*'s, he dates *March the 5th*, 1678, (almost a whole year before) which would intimate, that Mr. *John Fincham* swore prophetically, or by way of prevention. But the *Observer* Numb. 10. having recollcted himself, pretends 'twas a mistake for want of a fraction; and if it were so, I believe it was the first Affidavit in England



England, that e're was Dated with such a Fraction, as 1673, but since he is pleased to lay the blame on the *Sot of a Compositor*, as young Princes in Schools are whipt by Proxy, and perhaps old Authors have the like privilege; let it pass.

But whereas Mr. *John Fincham* Swears he never *knew Prance* (to his knowledge, or *saw him in his life*. I must remember that Gentleman, besides my being in his Company at Mrs. *Hall's* afore-mentioned, and else-where in *London*, I once went to his House, at the Request of his Brother, the Goldsmith, then living in the *Strand*, to see a Child of his there, and was Civilly entertained by Mr. *John Fincham*, and did eat and drink there: and another time before that, he procured me a place at the Court holden at *Wishitch*, to hear the Tryals and Proceedings there, where I stood just behind his back, as he sat on the Bench.

Trimmer. *Well--And here's one Oath against another.* [Ay, and let the Readers impartially Impanell'd give their Verdicts.]

Observer. *Patience, I pray thee, in August 1679, Prance being in the Isle of Ely, and finding that his Credit was sunk from Silver to Brass, by the confounding a Deposition of Mr. John Fincham [of which Prance never heard word or syllable, till in this Observer, January 26, 1683.] he burst out presently into invectives against the said John Fincham, and said, he was a Papist, and that he had a Priest in's House, and that he had sometimes 4 or 5 Priests and Jesuits; and that he had seen him in the Company of as many in London: All which he was ready to prove: And these words were made out by the Informations of two Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood, as they were taken before Francis Bell and Thomas Edwards, Esquires, Justices of the Peace within the said Isle, on the 11th and 12th of August, 1679.*

"The Information of *Edward Squire* Gent. Chief Constable of the North part of the Hundred of *Witchford*, taken before us *Francis Bell* and *Thomas Edwards*, Esquires, Justices of the Peace within the Isle of *Ely*, &c. August 11: 1679.

"This Informant saith, That on *Fryday* the 8th Instant, he happened in the Company of one *Miles Prance*, where discoursing about the next Election to be of Parliament-men, *Prance* was very earnest for the Chusing of one Mr. *Partherich*, for Knight of the Shire for *Cambridg-shire*, declaring that he was a fit Man for that purpose: And presently after he began to discourse of one Mr. *Fincham*, a Justice of the Peace, and said that he would prove him a Papist, and that he hath a Priest now in his House, and sometimes he hath four or five; and that he the said *Prance* had seen the said Mr. *Fincham* in the Company of as many Priests and Jesuits in *London*; and told this Informant, that he wondered, the Justices of the Peace should be so much Fools, or had so little wit, as to make him, this Informant, Chief Constable; and said he would have most of the Gentlemen in the Country up, with several other Reflecting and Scandalous Discourses upon, as well the said Mr. *Fincham*, as the Gentlemen in the Country.

*Edward Squire.*

"The Information of *William Gent*, of *March*, taken ut *Supra*, August 12, 1679.

"This Informant saith, that upon *Fryday* at Night, the 8th of this instant *August*, one Mr. *Miles Prance*, and another person, to this Deponent unknown, came into the Company of him, this Deponent. He, this Deponent, having then some Neighbours in Company with him, at the House of one *William Phillipson*, in *March* aforesaid; and after some familiar Discourse had passed, between him, the said Mr. *Prance*, and this Deponent, the said Mr. *Prance* being very intimately acquainted with him, this Deponent, he, the said Mr. *Prance*, did ask this Deponent, where one Mr. *Fincham* was? To which this Deponent answered, He liveth very near me in the Country; and thereupon he, this Deponent, did tell him, it was reported, that he should say he was a Papist; to which Mr. *Prance* replyed, He was a Papist, and he would justify him to be a Papist; and he believed that he had a Priest at his House at that time; and that he knew him to have been in the Company of four or five Jesuits at a time: And the said Mr. *Prance* did also give other reproachful Speeches, which he, this Deponent, did not take any particular notice of.

*Francis Bell,  
Thomas Edwards.*

F

*William Gent.*

As

Asto all this, I desire the Reader to observe, 1<sup>st</sup>. That these Informations are not said to be *sworn to*, and truly for the Persons sake concern'd, I hope they are not upon *Oath*. 2<sup>ly</sup>. The two Informers (like the two Witnesses in the Story of *Susanna*) do not much agree. Mr. *Squire* says, that *Prance* was very earnest for abusing of one Mr. *Partherich* for Knight of the Shire for Cambridge-shire, declaring that he was a fit man for that purpose. Now, Mr. *Gent* (who was present all the time of our Colloquy) says nothing of that, and so far is it from Truth, that I do protest I do not know, nor never saw that Mr. *Partherich*, here mentioned, in my whole Life. And tho' possibly I might then have had some pretence to have concern'd my self in the Election of Parliament-men for that County, yet, I appeal to all the Inhabitants, whether ever I endeavour'd to move any one of them (except only this worthy *Squire*, if he say true) to give their Votes for Mr. *Partherich* or any other person whatsoever? For indeed, I living elsewhere, never thought it fit to concern my self with any such matters. 2<sup>ly</sup>. Mr. *Squire* says, I said, Mr. *Justice* hath a Priest now in his House, but Mr. *Gent* says, I said—I believed he had a Priest at his House at that time. Now he that forgot so much, and took no particular notice of our talk, as he says, might possibly misremember all the rest. 3<sup>ly</sup>. Mr. *Gent* says, I askt him, where one Mr. *Fincham* was? To which the Deponent answered, he liveth very near in the Country; a likely business! as if I, that was born within five miles of Mr. *Justice Fincham*, and have been so frequently in that Country, I, that was so well acquainted with *Richard Fincham*, so intimate with his Brother the Goldsmith, and with another Brother of theirs the Sea-man, I that have visited their near Relation, *Fincham* in *Witch-Goad*, besides my familiarity with the *Justice* in *London*, at his House at *Well*, &c. should yet be such an Ignoramus to ask the advice of this small Lawyer, where (forsooth) one Mr. *Fincham* was, and receive for answer, as News——That he liv'd near in the Country—Let all Mankind judge of the probability of such an Information.

Fourthly, Mr. *Squires* own words (as here Printed, for if either of the Gentlemen are wrong'd, they must seek satisfaction from their Over-officious friend the *Observer*) I say by his own words it appears, there was a fewd and something of *Malice* in the Case; for at the same time, he charges me (tho' falsely) with saying, That I wondered the *Justices of Peace* should be so much Fools, or had so little Wit, as to make him Chief Constable. And I might add, that Mr. *Gent*, the other Informer (as they are here styl'd) was not likely to be Guilty of any good will to me; retaining to this day a Bond of mine, about the surrender of some Land, the Condition whereof is satisfied, and the whole Story of which I am not willing to tire the Reader with, unless further provok'd.

These Remarks being premised, I shall next subjoin the Truth of the matter of Fact, not in my own words, but attested by the Person that was then with me, viz. Mr. *Pask*, a Citizen of *London*, one well known to be far from any suspicion of Disloyalty, who immediately after this bustle happened at *March*, did with his own hand, write down and deliver to me this following Attestation, viz.

“*Memorandum*, On the 8th day of August 1679. Mr. *Miles Prance* and my self were “at the *White-Heart Inn* in *March*, asking for Mr. *Gent*, The Landlord answered, he “was in the House, Mr. *Prance* went to the Company's Room, desired leave, if not business, where he was received seemingly in kindness, and also desired me to walk in: “Where presently Mr. *Squire* and Mr. *Harrison* asked him, if he was come to choose “Esq; *Partherich* Parliament-Man, intimating he was a disaffected Person, and not fit “to be chose. Mr. *Prance* made answer to Mr. *Harrison* he was an Ass, for to tell “him such a thing, and he was not to acquaint him, what he came about. Mr. *Squire* “and Mr. *Harrison* made answer, that *Prance* was a Rogue, and Esq; *Partherich* a “Phanatick Rogue, so was all that stood for him. They abused Mr. *Prance* with “the Language of Rogue, a fellow not to be trusted, a murdering Rogue, and what he “had said was all false, bid him make haste home, and give the King Confession.

But further, most true it is, that this Mr. *Squire*, and one Mr. *Harrison*, did not only use ill Language to me, but pursued me to one Mrs. *Walsomes* House, threatned to knock me o'th' head, and throw me into the River, and afterwards offered to Assault me in my Lodging, so that Mr. *Pask* was forc'd to draw his Sword to keep them down. For which I did, as justly I might, tell them I would call them to an account, which it seems, he is pleas'd to express by the Phrase; That I would have met of the Gentlemen in the Country up. But whether this Titular *Squire* and Mr. *Harrison* the Tape-seller be Gentlemen, or most

of the Gentlemen of the Country, I leave to the Heralds. This is certain, I had sought Reparations from the Rioters for the abuse, had not *Squire Williamson* interceded, alledging they were in *Drink*, and so I civilly pass'd it by, and never heard more of that matter, till now I found the Gentlemens Information in Print--- Lets go on, the *Observer* next brings to light two other Papers, in these words.

You shall now have Two Certificates of August the 12th, 1679, in Justification of M.

John Fincham.

"WE whose Names are hereunto subscribed, do humbly Certifie, That we have known *John Fincham*, of *Ourwell*, in the Isle of *Ely*, and County of *Cambridge*, Esq; by the space of twenty years, during all which time, we have had a frequent Converse with him, as being our Neighbour, and of whom we have observ'd a constant and dutiful Compliance with the Commands of the Church of *England*, of which we do believe him to be a true member.

Francis Bell.

Thomas Edwards.

August 12.

1679.

"THIS is Humbly to Certifie, That *John Leigh*, Clerk, have been Rector of the Parish Church of *Ourwell*, in the County of *Norfolk*, by the space of 27 years; all which time, I have had a personal knowledge of *John Fincham*, Esq; and with whom, being one of my Parishoners, I have had, both in Health and Sicknes, very particular Converse. And in all my Conversation with him, I have ever observ'd him to bear a great regard to the Commands of the Church of *England*. Of which Church I do with great Reason believe him to be a true and obedient Son.

John Leigh.

August 12, 1679.

I question not the Truth of these Certificates; for neither do I know, nor ever said (with the leave of the *Observer*, and his Informers, be it spoken) that Justice *Fincham* was a *Papist* (and yet had I no value for an Oath (as the *Observer* pretends) I might as readily have Sworn that, and that I saw him at *Mass*; for *Mass* was frequently said in *Mrs. Hall's* House; but I did never see him so concerned, and therefore only depose, what I knew, and what I saw and heard) therefore I again Repeat it, that I never knew, or said the Gentleman was a *Papist* or *Roman Catholick*, or that 4 or 5, or any *Romish* Priests were in his House. But this I will say, That I conceive these Certificates might have been better worded in favour of the Gentleman, than only by these Terms of his Compliance with, and Regard to the Commands of the Church of *England*, since it would have done well (especially at such a Juncture as that was) to have likewise expressed his Zeal in and for the Doctrines of our Church, and to have Certified his Active diligence in Discourtenancing and Suppressing *Papists*, &c.

Trimmer. And now we have done I hope. [Better never have begun.]

*Observer*. Within a Trifle, Trimmer, July 13, 1631, It happened, That *Prance* and another with him, came into the House of one *Greenwood* in the Isle, where *John Fincham*, *Henry Oxburgh*, and *Edm. Williamson*, Esquires, were in Company: *Mr. Williamson* having told *Mr. Fincham*, which of the two was *Prance*; *Mr. Fincham* upon this, fell to talk with *Prance* at a distance, of his being in the Country, about two years before, which he owned. And he told him of a Neighbour of his, one *Mr. Fincham*, that complain'd of very ill Language he had given him. But *Prance* denied it, and desired much to know how the Story went: So *Mr. Fincham* up and told *Prance* the whole Business, according to the Informations; who Swore heartily, 'twas no such matter, and that he never spake an ill word of *Mr. Fincham*, but knew him to be a Protestant and a worthy man. This passed in a great deal of Company: But *Prance's* Eyes are as bad by Day-light, as Oats are by Candle-light; and he knew *Mr. Fincham* no more than the Man in the Moon, till at last *Mr. Fincham* himself brought the Silver-Smith to a better understanding.

I am apt to think *Mr. Fincham* will Con the *Observer* no thanks for this Paragraph, for sure the whole Town of *March*, who were almost all Alarm'd with this Accident, have not quite forgot it. However for their sakes, and the Justices, and my own, I must set the Story right.

'Tis most true, that about the time mentioned, I and another or two happened to come to *Greenwoods* House, being an Inn, where several Gentlemen, and amongst them, *Mr. Justice Fincham*, were (as I afterwards understood) about taking Horse to Ride away, but *Mr. Fincham* having, as I believe, some design to expose me, after they saw me come in, they staid, and *Squire Williamson*, who was one of the Gentlemen, came out, and invited me into their Room; I excused my self at first, as being weary with my Journey; but

but at last consented, when I and my Company came in, there were several Gentlemen in the Room, and some that I did *not know*. Presently some of them began to ask me *what News?* I told them, I seldom much minded any News, but my own business, and besides had been several days out of *London*, and so could tell them nothing, but what I believed they had already heard, then one of them askt me, *if I knew Justice Fincham?* To which I answered, yes, I do, and presently looking amongst the Company (for I was but newly come into the Room) I saw the Justice leaning on a Bench or Couch, with his *Mountee-Cap* placed in an odd unusual fashion, *viz.* the corners not forwards and backwards, but *cross* his Head, sideways, looking in that posture somewhat like a Country Morrice-dancer, with a *Cushion* on his Head; but for all that I knew his Worship well enough, and addressing my self to him with the respect becoming me, said — *Mr. Fincham, your humble Servant.* At which all the Company fell a laughing, (and his Worships being deceived in thinking I should not know him in that posture, became soon after a frequent talk in the Town.) And then, and not *till then*, Mr. Fincham did speak, (for before I was come into the Room he had not utter'd a word, much less askt such questions, and had such discourse with me as the *Observer* pretends) but then indeed he did say, that he *never saw me before in his life*, that he knew of, *nor never told me that his Brother was a Priest.* But as I then to his face justified the latter, so as to the first, I gave him some tokens to refresh his memory, as my coming to his House to see his Brothers Son, and his particular Entertainment of me there. But he spake not a word about *my calling him Papist*, nor was there any the least mention of these *Informations*, nor any *swearing* heartily or unheartily, as the *Observer* suggests. And I believe Squire *Williamson* will do me the right to justify this to be in substance the truth of all that then past between us; and there were also present two other Persons, who will be ready to attest it. Now since Mr. *L'Estrange* has the Conscience so grossly to pervert and *false* a matter thus *Notorious*, what esteem his Writings in other Cases (as relating to me I mean, for I meddle no further) may deserve, let the World judge.

In his *Observer* Numb. 10. of the 2d. Volume he has some touches at me, and reckons up several Affidavits of mine, and says, *they took no effect*, yes *Sir*, they took all the effect I desired, which was only to acquaint the Magistrates with the Truth of what they examined me about, as far as I knew and no further; and the tenderness I used, strongly argues the candor and sincerity of my Evidence, no way casts any disparagement upon it; *the Law* in some Cases require *two* Witnesses, and for want thereof, some, I justly accused, were released, or if perhaps others were not prosecuted, what is that to me. The Author of the late Paper, pretending to be a Reply to the *Observations* on the Lord *Peter's* Letter, argues the veracity of the late Evidence, because so many that they accused are a *liberty*; Mr. *L'Estrange* for the very *same reason*, would render mine unworthy of belief. These two Authors should best consult together and reconcile themselves.

But I fear I have wearied the Reader as well as my self, in taking so much notice of, and detecting the malice, the falsities, the shams and idle Tales, which the *Observer* has invented, or pickt up and spread about me; which of themselves sufficiently appear to every judicious Eye to be mere *Calumnies* and the effects of a *cankered spleen*. However to undeceive all the World, if they are not resolv'd to believe his Fictions, in defiance both of Truth and Reason, I have *once for all*, taken this pains, resolving never to trouble my self further with the noise he shall make about them; henceforth he may talk his pleasure, I shall take no more notice on't, than to hear a Serpent *Hiss*, or an Ass *Bray*. Only I desire all Persons to bind up this my Answer and Defence with their *Observers*, and that as oft as Mr. *L'Estrange* shall repeat the same Stories (for he has much of the *Cuckoo* in him, and sings an hundred times over the same Note) they would be so just, as to turn as often to these Papers, where I doubt not, but every impartial peruser, will find a sufficient Answer thereunto.

And so I take leave of Mr. *L'Estrange*, who being an Antient Gentleman, and by the Course of Nature on the brink of the Grave; I wish, he would better regulate his Conduct, and not spend his precious time, and abuse those Great Parts, God has given him, in such trifling, false, mischievous and scandalous Stories against a Neighbour, a Parishioner, and a Member of the same Protestant Church (if he be really what he professes:) who, as I never wrong'd him; so I am ready, on his acknowledgment, heartily to forgive him all these injuries: And pray God to give him the Grace to Repent, before he be called to that dreadful Tribunal, before which we must both shortly appear.

*Miles Prance.*







